
INTRODUCTION

There are few constants in today's ever-changing world, but one of them certainly is man's reliance upon the sea. From the ancient Greeks and Romans to today, civilized man has depended upon the sea for food, transport, and the fundamental communication of peoples and commerce. The same will hold true 20 years from now; in fact, the increasingly interconnected world of 2020 may be more reliant on the sea than ever for food, transportation, energy, and even minerals. Maritime security, therefore, will be critical to the basic functioning of the global economy of 2020. To prepare for the near future, we must assess, to the best of our ability, the security environment we will face in the next two decades.

First, what is "maritime security?" It can be considered in the classical military sense as protection of the homeland and the nation's commerce from conventional seaborne military attack. That definition could be broadened to include security from any hostile force on the seas, be it military, pirate, or terrorist. Maritime security can also be thought of as the safety of life and property at sea, whether the threat be natural or manmade. It can also be viewed from the law enforcement perspective – drug trafficking at sea is a threat to the nation's security, as is the maritime trafficking in human beings. It could even be a reference to the protection of the natural marine environment. Finally, maritime security can be broadly defined in a national security context to include the protection of all of the nation's interests on the seas.

Today's maritime, and other, security threats are not like yesterday's or tomorrow's. Over time, some threats will remain, others emerge, and yet others will disappear, overcome by technology and geopolitical changes, or rendered obsolete by other forces. By 2020, for example, access to ocean surveillance information from space-based sensors may be so advanced as to render unnecessary some of the traditional methods of reconnaissance. On the other hand, many of the maritime security challenges of 2020 will still have to be addressed at sea, and will require an appropriate response force capability to confront such challenges effectively and efficiently. This, of course, translates to having the resources, assets, technology, and supporting infrastructure required to meet the threats and challenges of today – and tomorrow – in the littoral regions, across the sea lines of communication, and in the deepwater environment.

Threats and Challenges to Maritime Security 2020 presents some of the forces, events, and activities foreseen in the next 20 years that will have broadly defined maritime security implications. The focus is not on the capabilities and threats posed by foreign navies, but on 1) the overarching forces and events that will shape the maritime security environment in 2020, and 2) the actual activities occurring in that environment and their relation to maritime security. The reader may view the majority of subjects treated in this paper as unconventional or asymmetric, and so they are. At first glance, some of the subjects may even appear irrelevant to maritime security, as considered in the classical

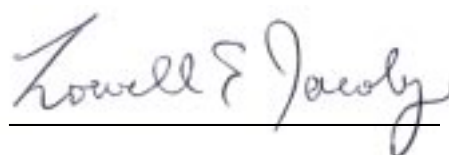
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sense. However, the world of 1999 is becoming more interconnected and complicated by the day. Traditional concepts of national security are being reevaluated and expanded. Defining what is and what is not in the national interest in the post-Cold War world is an ongoing debate. The world is changing, and issues presented in this paper may very well be *the critical issues* of maritime security in 2020.

The information in the following pages has been jointly produced by the U.S. Coast Guard Intelligence Coordination Center and the Office of Naval Intelligence. In its preparation we have drawn upon the expertise of the academic, scientific, and intelligence communities to assist us in predicting— to the best of our ability—the maritime security environment for the first two decades of the new millennium. This publication may be used for a variety of strategic planning purposes, including force structure and the development of Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C²ISR) requirements. We believe it will play a critical role in articulating the future threats and challenges which require a response from U.S. forces.

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